

## Voicing Your Concerns

If you have a concern about a decision we've made, an action we've taken, the lack of action on our part, or the way you've been treated, we want to know about it.

1. The first step you should always take is to talk to the Family Services employee who is involved.
2. If you don't feel comfortable talking to this person or are unhappy with the response you get, please contact his or her supervisor.
3. If the issue is still not settled, please contact the district director of the Family Services Office you are working with.
4. If the issue is still not resolved, please call our main office at (802) 241-2131. A staff person will hear your concerns and inform you of any next steps you can take.

You can expect to be treated respectfully by Family Services staff; we hope that you will treat our staff the same way.

## Family Services

If you require an accommodation because of a disability, please let us know.

### Main Office

103 So. Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-2401  
Phone: 802-241-2131 • Fax: 802-241-2407

### District Offices

#### BARRE - 479-4260

255 North Main St., Suite 7, Barre, VT 05641-4189

#### BENNINGTON - 442-8138

200 Veterans Memorial Dr., Suite 14  
Bennington, VT 05201-1956

#### BRATTLEBORO - 257-2888

232 Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Brattleboro, VT 05301-2879

#### BURLINGTON - 863-7370

1193 North Ave, Burlington, VT 05401-2749

#### HARTFORD - 295-8840

226 Holiday Dr., Ste. 32,  
White River Jct., VT 05001-2024

#### MIDDLEBURY - 388-4660

700 Exchange St., Ste. 105, Middlebury, VT 05753-1529

#### MORRISVILLE - 888-4576

63 Professional Dr., Suite 3, Morrisville, VT 05661-8522

#### NEWPORT - 334-6723

100 Main Street, Suite 230, Newport, VT 05855-4898

#### RUTLAND - 786-5817

220 Asa Bloomer Bldg  
88 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT 05701-3449

#### ST. ALBANS - 527-7741

20 Houghton St., Ste. 211, St. Albans, VT 05478-2247

#### ST. JOHNSBURY - 748-8374

67 Eastern Ave., Ste. 4, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-5603

#### SPRINGFIELD - 885-8900

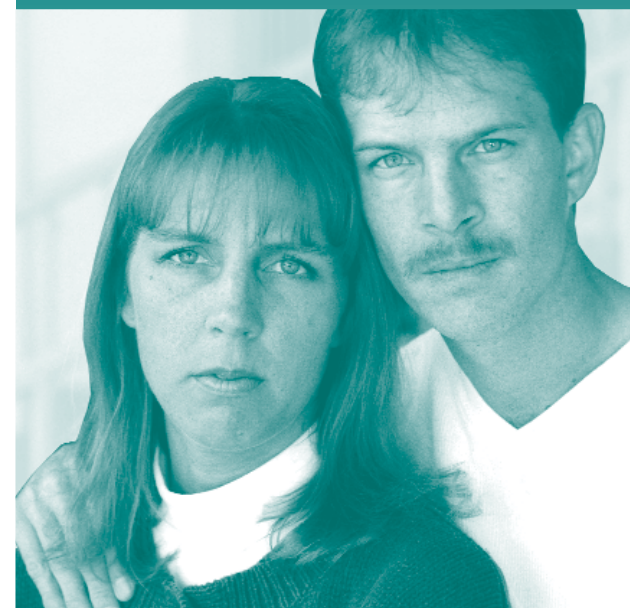
100 Mineral St., Ste. 101, Springfield, VT 05156-3166

<http://www.dcf.state.vt.us/fsd/>

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## Your Guide To Voicing Your Concerns



# DCF

Department for Children and Families  
Family Services Division

*"The work we do requires us to make difficult decisions on a daily basis--ones that affect people's lives and that not everyone will agree with.*

*"In order to make sure the decisions we make are in the best interest of the children involved, we need to hear from you if you have concerns; listen with an open mind; and learn from what you have to say.*

*"To help you share your concerns with us, we've set up two separate procedures: one for requesting a formal review of a decision that affects the life of a child in state custody and another for expressing your concerns about a decision we've made, an action we've taken, the lack of action on our part, or the way you've been treated.*

*"Let your voice be heard. We care about what you think."*

**- Cindy Walcott, Deputy Commissioner  
Family Services Division**

## Requesting A Review

If you disagree with a decision that affects the life of a child in state custody, you may be able to request a review—a formal way of taking another look at a decision that has been made.

### What Type Of Decisions May Be Reviewed?

- The living arrangements for a child
- The plan for visits between a child and family members
- The long-term goal for a child such as returning home or being adopted

### Who Can Request A Review?

- The child in question
- The child's attorney and Guardian ad Litem
- The child's parents
- The child's foster parents if the child has been living with them for at least the last three months. Note: to appeal the child's move to another family for the purpose of adoption, the foster parents must have already expressed—in writing—their intent to adopt the child.

**We will not review decisions already made by a court or those scheduled to be heard in court within a reasonable time frame.**

## How Do I Request A Review?

To request a review, you must submit your request—in writing—to the district director of the Family Services Office that is involved.

Your letter must be received no later than ten (10) days after you were informed about the decision in question.

Be sure to include the following:

- The decision in question
- The person(s) who made the decision
- The decision you propose instead
- The efforts you've made to resolve the situation
- Your relationship to the child
- Your name, address, and daytime telephone number

Note: a child may request a review simply by asking his or her social worker.

### What Happens Next?

1. The district director will contact you to set up a meeting.
2. Following the meeting, the district director will inform you—in writing—of the decision made, the reason for the decision, and any options you have for further review.